

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method for whitening a dental surface, the method comprising nonsimultaneously applying a whitening composition to the surface, said whitening composition comprising at least one orally acceptable peroxy compound, and directing a volume of up to about 2.5 ml of an atomized activating composition on to the surface, wherein the activating composition comprises, in said volume, a peroxy compound activating effective amount of at least one orally acceptable basifying agent, and wherein applying said whitening composition and directing said activating composition are separated by an interval not greater than a peroxy compound activating effective interval.
2. The method of Claim 1 wherein the activating composition raises pH in the immediate environment of the dental surface to a value of at least about 7.
3. The method of Claim 1 wherein applying said whitening composition and directing said activating composition are separated by an interval not greater than about 1 hour.
4. The method of Claim 1 wherein said directing of the atomized activating composition on to the dental surface precedes said applying of the whitening composition to the surface.
5. The method of Claim 4 wherein said directing of the atomized activating composition substantially immediately precedes said applying of the whitening composition.
6. The method of Claim 1 wherein said directing of the atomized activating composition on to the dental surface follows said applying of the whitening composition to the surface.
7. The method of Claim 6 wherein said directing of the atomized activating composition substantially immediately follows said applying of the whitening composition.
8. The method of Claim 1 wherein the whitening composition is selected from the group consisting of mouthwashes, dentifrices, oral strips, liquid whiteners and chewing gums.
9. The method of Claim 1 wherein the at least one peroxy compound is selected from the group consisting of hydrogen peroxide, peroxides of alkali and alkaline earth metals, organic peroxy compounds, peroxy acids and salts thereof, and polymer-peroxide complexes.
10. The method of Claim 1 wherein the at least one peroxy compound is hydrogen peroxide.

11. The method of Claim 1 wherein the whitening composition comprises at least one peroxy compound in a total hydrogen peroxide equivalent amount of about 0.1% to about 10% by weight.
12. The method of Claim 1 wherein the activating composition is directed on to the dental surface in a volume of about 25 μ l to about 1 ml.
13. The method of Claim 1 wherein the activating composition is a liquid comprising the basifying agent in aqueous solution.
14. The method of Claim 13 wherein the at least one basifying agent is an alkali metal carbonate or bicarbonate salt.
15. The method of Claim 13 wherein the at least one basifying agent is sodium bicarbonate.
16. The method of Claim 15 wherein the activating composition comprises about 0.5% to about 20% by weight sodium bicarbonate.
17. The method of Claim 13 wherein the activating composition has a pH of about 8 to about 12.
18. The method of Claim 13 wherein the activating composition further comprises at least one ingredient selected from the group consisting of cosolvents, mouth feel modifying agents, surfactants, preservatives, sweeteners, flavorants and colorants.
19. A kit useful for whitening a dental surface, the kit comprising a whitening composition that comprises at least one orally acceptable peroxy compound, and an atomizable activating composition that comprises, in a volume not greater than about 2.5 ml thereof, a peroxy compound activating effective amount of at least one orally acceptable basifying agent.